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Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
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Annual report to the Economic and Social Council

Summary

The present report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 62/208 of 19 December 2007 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and with decisions 1995/5 and 2011/1 of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). This report will be submitted to the Economic and Social Council for consideration at its substantive session of 2012.

A draft decision is included in section VIII.

* E/2012/100 (to be issued).
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I. Introduction

1. The present report is prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review (TCPR) of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. It follows previous annual reports to the Economic and Social Council and may be read in conjunction with the annual reports of the Executive Director to the Executive Board of UNICEF. Together, these documents provide an analysis of achievements against the key results of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) for 2006-2013. The present document is also prepared in response to Executive Board decision 2011/1.

II. Funding for operational activities

2. UNICEF recorded an increase of 13 per cent in its annual income, from $3,256 million in 2009 to $3,682 million in 2010. Total income from public sector donors increased by 8 per cent, from $2,251 million in 2009 to $2,440 million in 2010. Private sector income increased by 30 per cent, from $916 million in 2009 to $1,188 million in 2010.

3. The effects of the global financial crisis are, however, reflected in the decline of UNICEF regular (core) resources income since 2008. The share of regular resources income as a percentage of total income stood at 26 per cent in 2010, compared to 38 per cent in 2006 and 49 per cent in 2002. This relatively low proportion is of concern, as the capacity of UNICEF to provide continued leadership on child-related priorities throughout the world largely depends upon a strong and reliable core income. In 2010, total regular resources from public and private sector contributions dropped 9 per cent to $965 million from $1,066 million in the previous year.

4. Total income from public and private donors for other resources in 2010 increased by 24 per cent, to $2,717 million from $2,190 million in 2009. Total income for other resources-regular from public and private sectors was $1,694 million, compared with $1,527 million in 2009. Other resources-emergency also recorded an increase, to $1,023 million in 2010 from $663 million in 2009, largely due to the response to humanitarian crises in Haiti and Pakistan.

5. UNICEF continued to expand its participation in United Nations coherence and inter-organizational partnership arrangements through a variety of pooled funds and multi-donor trust funds. The income of UNICEF from various inter-organizational arrangements grew by 20 per cent, from $296 million in 2009 to $356 million in 2010. Funding for UNICEF through the Delivering as One Fund increased to $33 million in 2010 from $26.7 million in 2009.

6. In 2010, thematic funds, the best alternative to regular resources, saw an increase of 5 per cent, to $241 million, from $230 million for 2009. Of this, 55 per cent was earmarked by donors for Basic Education and Gender Equality activities.

7. As of 30 September 2011, UNICEF had recorded $786 million in emergency funding to respond to the humanitarian needs of children and women across the globe. Within this, UNICEF had received $345 million against funding requirements of $364 million to address the needs of children and women in the Horn of Africa affected by drought and famine.

III. Strategic partnerships, including cooperation with the World Bank and other international financial institutions

8. Guided by the MTSP and the Strategic Framework for Partnerships and Collaborative Relationships (E/ICEF/2009/10), UNICEF continued its efforts to become more strategic and coherent in its partnering. This included actions to streamline partnering arrangements and integrate them into the planning, implementation, reporting, and monitoring and evaluation systems of UNICEF. For example, UNICEF in Mali, in cooperation with the Government, conducted a mapping of the corporate sector in an effort to develop an engagement strategy that will contribute to results for children.

9. Performance benchmarks were introduced for UNICEF offices as a means to promote a more coherent approach to partnering. Guidance was also strengthened for the selection and management of partnerships with the corporate sector, civil society organizations and global programme partners.

10. Recognizing the potential for corporations to make an identifiable and lasting contribution towards improving the children's lives and protecting their rights, significant strides were made to advance the approach of UNICEF to partnering with the private sector. A new draft paper describing the UNICEF vision for corporate engagement calls for an expanded, strategic and proactive approach to the corporate sector, aimed to leverage the full range of resources that corporations can contribute.

11. UNICEF continued to work with the private sector to mobilize a wide range of assets. More than 600 corporate partners and donors continued to support UNICEF in promoting child health and nutrition, preventing HIV/AIDS, providing quality basic education for all, and protecting children from violence and exploitation. New resource mobilization alliances were launched, for example between UNICEF and the International Zinc Association to support zinc supplementation programmes. The relationships of UNICEF with existing partners, such as IKEA, Proctor & Gamble, ING, H&M, Futbol Club Barcelona, were further strengthened with increased investments for children.

12. UNICEF, International Save the Children Alliance and the United Nations Global Compact launched a joint initiative to develop a set of principles to guide businesses on how to protect and promote children's rights in all aspects of business operations, including the workplace, the marketplace, the community and the environment.

13. Almost all UNICEF-supported country programmes collaborated with civil society organizations and community-based organizations in areas of work ranging from service delivery to communication and advocacy. In Brazil, for example, UNICEF, in partnership with the Sociedade Paraense de Pediatria, the Government and other partners, helped to extend health care services to disadvantaged groups through more than 222,000 community health workers covering nearly 110 million people.

14. UNICEF also continued to work with faith-based organizations and religious communities. For example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNICEF entered into a partnership with major religious groups, with a combined network of

over 30 million people, to promote key family health practices such as breastfeeding and immunization.

15. Progress made in civil society partnerships was complemented by increasingly successful engagement with parliamentarians. For example, more than 10 national parliaments from Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States participated in a regional conference focusing on parliamentary oversight mechanisms for areas such as child protection and early childhood development policies for the most vulnerable children.

16. The year 2011 also illustrated the potential of civil society organizations and parliaments to achieve equitable results for children. Global programme partnerships (GPPs) such as the GAVI Alliance and the Global Partnership for Education, are expanding the current system of international cooperation by drawing in stakeholders from public and non-public sectors to deliver global and national public goods for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Through its engagement in GPPs, UNICEF seeks to leverage collective action for programme implementation and to raise the visibility of issues that have a clear equity dimension, such as widening access to public goods and services, strengthening standards, and supporting research and product development initiatives addressing the needs of marginalized families.

17. At the country level, most GPPs serve as advocacy and coordination platforms to promote policy and institutional reforms (e.g., the International Health Partnership, the Sanitation and Water for All partnership), strengthen national capacities (e.g., the Child Rights Information Network, the Flour Fortification Initiative), and provide resources to scale up high-impact interventions (e.g., the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the Polio Eradication initiative). Many of these partnerships are supported by the country-level convening power and technical and operational strengths of UNICEF. At global level, UNICEF engages in multi-stakeholder dialogue to shape global public policies and practices, such as the Decade of Vaccines collaboration, and to address market failures, for example through the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI Alliance).

18. UNICEF continued to develop its collaboration with the international financial institutions, including the World Bank, the regional development banks, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), aimed at promoting greater attention to children's issues in these organizations. Almost all UNICEF offices reported some form of collaboration with the World Bank in 2010. Engagement has become more frequent, substantive, and in many cases, formalized: the number of country-level Memorandums of Understanding rose from 10 in 2009 to 44 in 2010. The most common forms of engagement were information exchange, technical collaboration, advocacy, and partnership on assessments and analytical work. Basic education, social protection and health remain the top three areas of collaboration.

19. Funding constitutes a small but important part of the engagement with the World Bank. Between 2005 and 2010, annual income from the Bank increased from nearly $3 million to nearly $51 million. Of this, 71 per cent was received directly from World Bank-administered trust funds and 29 per cent was from Governments that received Bank grants. In addition, partnership with the Bank has leveraged significant resources channelled through procurement services. As of August 2011, the Procurement Services Agreement for use by Governments, concluded between

UNICEF and the World Bank in 2008, had been implemented 43 times in 18 countries, and the value of the agreements signed or under negotiation had reached $698 million.

20. UNICEF maintains a strong engagement at the biannual meetings of the World Bank and IMF Boards of Governors by submitting written statements to the Development Committee. In the spring of 2011, the statement of UNICEF focused on equity as a prerequisite for sustainable recovery and accelerated progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, and on how to best support fragile and conflict-affected countries. In conjunction with this, UNICEF and the World Bank are publishing joint guidance on a child-focused module for Poverty and Social Impact Analyses.

21. UNICEF also continued to strengthen its collaboration with the regional development banks. Half of UNICEF country offices reported engaging with a relevant regional development bank in 2010. Consultations were held in April 2011 with the Inter-American Development Bank, and plans were agreed for joint efforts in education, birth registration, and sports for development. UNICEF has also been collaborating with the African Development Bank on an action framework for tackling the barriers to scaling up health interventions through "Harmonization for Health in Africa". The Memorandum of Understanding agreed in 2010 with the Asian Development Bank is providing a good framework for closer country collaboration, notably on water, sanitation and hygiene and on education.

22. One third of UNICEF country offices reported engagement in policy dialogue with the IMF in 2010. In April 2010, the two institutions agreed on common objectives of strengthening social protection and protecting core social spending within a sustainable macroeconomic framework, and of avoiding adverse impacts of economic policies on the most vulnerable groups.

IV. Contribution to national capacity development and development effectiveness

Capacity development

23. UNICEF recognizes that in order to achieve sustained results for children's rights, capacity development must be integrated as a key strategy. As outlined in the common guidance issued by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG),[1] capacity development requires a comprehensive approach that involves promoting an enabling environment, while concurrently supporting change at the organizational and individual levels. The approach also promotes national ownership in order to institutionalize systematic improvements in capacity. A note on the approach of UNICEF to capacity development,[2] presented to the Executive Board at its second regular session of 2010, emphasizes that an effective approach to capacity development is based on a thorough analysis of the capacity gaps among

[1] "Enhancing the UN's contribution to National Capacity Development — A UNDG Position Statement", October 2006, and "United Nations Development System — A collective approach to supporting Capacity Development", August 2009.

[2] "The Approach of UNICEF to Capacity Development — Oral Report Background Note", September 2010.

duty bearers and rights holders for achieving children's rights in each country context.

24. Building on the framework outlined by the UNDG, several actions have been taken to strengthen the effectiveness of UNICEF cooperation in capacity development, including:

(a) Revising the Programme Policy and Procedures Manual and corresponding training materials of UNICEF to highlight the importance of developing a more systematic, holistic approach to capacity development;

(b) Further emphasizing the importance of analysing the context-specific bottlenecks and barriers preventing the most disadvantaged children and families from accessing basic services and practising life-saving and protective behaviours;

(c) Strengthening monitoring to assess reductions in bottlenecks and barriers and taking corrective action to ensure that capacity development efforts are sufficiently comprehensive, while addressing the factors that exclude various populations;

(d) Further promoting the sharing of evidence and lessons learned;[3]

(e) Enhancing UNICEF field reporting on capacity development to include performance against established benchmarks.

25. These initiatives have been incorporated into the planning and management of programmes promoting capacity development. For example, the strategic shift to further concentrate on systems-strengthening is prominently highlighted in the South Asia region. Evidence from an initiative in Bangladesh to increase the ability of women to obtain maternal and neonatal health services showed that the capacity of communities could be strengthened to monitor and support health facilities and that this resulted in improved health system performance and utilization. A more comprehensive approach to procurement is also being taken in the region to strengthening national procurement systems.

26. In Eastern and Southern Africa, an initiative in Mozambique to improve the quality of education effectively shifted its strategy from one-time training of teachers to strengthening the school cluster coordination system. This new system, under which a lead school serves as a resource centre for teacher learning and exchange, is strengthening both teacher support and monitoring.

27. Central and Eastern Europe offers several examples of capacity development interventions that involve both duty bearers and rights holders. In one such example, the support given for improving the management capacity of education officials was extended to community leaders, parents and children. This expanded approach is strengthening participation and accountability in the management of schools.

28. Measuring sustained changes in capacities, including improvements in the effectiveness of institutions, continues to require greater attention. There are positive examples in the East Asia and Pacific region, where support is provided to partners to conduct assessments of institutional capacity in health and education, including the establishment of baselines and performance monitoring systems for

[3] See, for example, UNICEF Division of Policy and Practice, "Developing capacities to realize the rights of children and women: selected innovations and lessons learned from UNICEF-assisted programmes", August 2011.

decision-making. These efforts will be expanded to include UNICEF cooperation in others sectors and additional countries.

South-South cooperation

29. UNICEF has deepened its involvement in South-South cooperation during this TCPR period, and the enhanced efforts have shown significant results. Planning for South-South cooperation is becoming more strategic, supported by the recent Programme Guidance Note on the subject.[4] UNICEF country offices increasingly recognize the potential for South-South and triangular cooperation to play a powerful role in promoting the Millennium Development Goals with equity, with activities increasingly focused on the most marginalized children and families.

30. A first-ever web conference on South-South cooperation, held in May 2011 for UNICEF staff in all offices, provided a forum for global knowledge-sharing, drawing on successful examples from Latin America and Africa. These examples highlighted demand-driven collaboration among countries at various governmental levels, the involvement of civil society, the significant possibilities for regional collaboration, and the potential role of UNICEF in facilitating these partnerships.

31. UNICEF has supported several initiatives to strengthen coordination among neighbouring countries. Particular attention has been given to cross-border child migration, and a number of countries have created joint frameworks to increase the safety of migrating children. Cooperation between the governments of Zimbabwe and South Africa, for example, resulted in a common tracing, identification, and reunification approach, as well as changed visa requirements and a predictable process of repatriation. This initiative is expected to become a regional approach. A second noteworthy partnership facilitated by UNICEF is the collaboration between the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Argentina in child protection. A further, widespread focus of cross-border cooperation has been synchronized planning for immunization and disease eradication.

32. Children's voices are increasingly heard in South-South cooperation. One notable example was a forum held by the African Youth and Adolescent Network in July 2010 in Kinshasa, which brought together 55 young leaders from nine countries to discuss issues related to HIV, maternal mortality and gender. The forum bolstered the technical capacity of youth leaders, created a Youth Action plan, and enabled dialogue around some of the difficult issues children face.

33. In facilitating South-South cooperation, UNICEF is playing an important role that can be even further strengthened through a more defined and strategic approach. In the past, the involvement of UNICEF focused mainly on study tours and information exchange; greater impact could be obtained by expanding this focus and by further engaging the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The new programme guidelines, a recent report from the Joint Inspection Unit on South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2011/3) and improved knowledge management will strengthen common understanding towards a more strategic approach, which will help to advance development results for children.

[4] UNICEF Division of Policy and Practice, "UNICEF Approaches to South-South Cooperation: Program Guidance Note", 2011.

Transition from relief to development

34. UNICEF continues to support the transition from emergency relief to recovery and longer-term development. The organization has deepened its commitment to reducing disaster risk and building resilience, developing national capacity, supporting peacebuilding, participating in post-crisis needs assessments, and constructively engaging with integrated presences.

35. In recognition of the growing imperative to help countries and communities to reduce underlying vulnerabilities, and be able to better prepare for and respond to crises, UNICEF issued global guidance in disaster risk reduction, with an emphasis on building community resilience. As of 2011, approximately 70 per cent of UNICEF country offices had integrated disaster risk reduction into annual workplans. While responding to the crisis in the Horn of Africa, UNICEF is drawing on investments made in regional disaster risk reduction to find ways to mitigate the impact of the crisis on families and to better support the longer-term resilience of communities.

36. The partnership of UNICEF with the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) remained strong, with UNICEF supporting the ISDR Thematic Platform on Knowledge and Education and continuing to work with its partners to advance child-focused disaster risk reduction. UNICEF supported the Mid-Term Review of the Hyogo Framework for Action, and contributed to the Global Assessment Report. At the bi-annual Global Platform, UNICEF and partners supported the development of a Children's Charter.

37. Capacity development is often at the core of successful transition. UNICEF also issued guidance on developing national capacities to deliver on the Core Commitments for Children (CCCs) in Humanitarian Action and supported several emergency-affected countries in applying a more strategic method to formulating capacity development plans.

38. UNICEF continued to implement the recommendations contained in the 2009 report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict[5] and played a significant role in the Senior Peacebuilding Group. UNICEF also chaired the Expert Reference Group of the United Nations Inter-Departmental Framework for Coordination on Early Warning and Preventive Action.

39. UNICEF played a key role in efforts to shape the sectoral prioritization of Peacebuilding Fund allocations, co-leading the sub-thematic group providing evidence and lessons on the importance of social service contributions to peacebuilding under the Thematic Review of the Fund. UNICEF participated in the Civilian Capacities Review Working Group, and contributed to the reports of the Secretary-General on civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict[6] and on women's participation in peacebuilding.[7] Through the United Nations Development Group (UNDG)-Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs Working Group on Transition, UNICEF provided ongoing advice on the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/International Network on Conflict and Fragility guidance on transition.

[5] A/63/881-S/2009/304.
[6] A/66/311-S/2011/527.
[7] A/65/354-S/2010/466.

40. UNICEF continued its strengthened role in post-crisis assessment and planning, supporting the pre-assessment phase of a post-conflict needs assessment for Libya. UNICEF provided expertise to lead the social services sub-thematic group. UNICEF also supported post-disaster needs assessments in Lao People's Democratic Republic and Lesotho.

41. UNICEF also continued its constructive engagement with integrated presences. At the global level, this included intensive engagement in the Integration Steering Group and Integrated Mission Planning Process. Consistent support was provided for advocacy for children's rights and priority issues in numerous global Integrated Mission Task Forces and in countries carrying out Integrated Strategic Frameworks and Technical Assessment Missions.

42. UNICEF crafted its country programme assistance in South Sudan to reflect the unique transitional needs of the new country, and supported integrated planning for the new United Nations Mission in South Sudan. UNICEF participated in the integrated planning team and worked with the Mission to identify innovative ways for improved collaboration in line with the Civilian Capacities Review, including in the area of child protection. In Côte d'Ivoire, UNICEF joined partners in developing an integrated, long-term vision for post-conflict recovery and reconstruction.

43. Through its cluster leadership, UNICEF continues to support early recovery approaches and to mainstream early recovery into its cluster work. In Haiti, UNICEF facilitated efforts to transition coordination from humanitarian clusters to nationally led structures, an experience with potential lessons for other countries. At the global level, the organization continues to be a key partner in the global Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Cluster Working Group for Early Recovery, advocating for and supporting more streamlined managerial and country-support systems.

Gender mainstreaming

44. UNICEF continues to implement its three-year Strategic Priority Action Plan (SPAP) on Gender Equality, 2010-2012. As previously reported (E/ICEF/2010/10) the SPAP lays out eight areas of change through which to transform UNICEF into an organization of excellence committed to promoting gender equality. It covers all aspects of UNICEF work, including in emergency and development contexts as well as advocacy and operations. Responsibility for the SPAP and its benchmarks rests with all parts of the organization; offices and divisions have been reporting on its implementation, which is monitored by the gender Equity Task Force. The intensive focus on gender equality throughout the work of UNICEF now forms a key component of the organization's refocus on promoting equity in the achievement of development results.

45. UNICEF began full implementation of the gender equality marker, which tracks the allocation and expenditure of resources in relation to gender-focused programme results. UNICEF will review the experience so far and refine the marker and its use for future years. The organization is also collaborating with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and other partners in the development of a United Nations system-wide marker, based on its own experience and that of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and IASC.

46. Country offices are expected to ensure that gender reviews of UNICEF-assisted country programmes are undertaken regularly. In response to the results of these reviews, specific actions are being taken to better mainstream gender into programmes. These actions include full-fledged office strategies; training to build staff capacity; and strengthening of gender focal point mechanisms by forming task teams with senior-level staff. A core package for conducting these gender reviews is being developed to encourage a more systematic approach and more effective follow-up.

47. To strengthen capacity to promote and support gender equality results, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN-Women and UNDP developed an e-learning course, "Gender Equality, UN Coherence and You", which was launched in March 2011. This course is open to all staff and establishes a minimum standard of introductory orientation on gender equality and United Nations system coherence. The course, the first such inter-agency learning tool on gender, is now being used as a basis for system-wide training. In addition, the UNICEF Programme Policy and Procedures Manual has been revised to include a stronger gender focus.

48. UNICEF has further integrated gender into humanitarian guidance and tools, including the CCCs, child protection cluster coordinator training, the programme guidance for disaster risk reduction, and revisions to emergency preparedness and response training. At the country level, a number of initiatives were undertaken to guide and train staff in these areas. The roll-out of UNICEF-specific and inter-agency guidance was carried out in part through the re-launch of the Community of Practice on Gender and Humanitarian Action.

49. In compliance with the Gender Parity and Equality Policy, the Division of Human Resources tracks gender balance of staffing and ensures that due consideration is given to the equal representation of women and men at all professional levels. Based on this overall policy, a framework of supportive policies and practices has been adopted, including a staff selection policy and policies on maternity and paternity leave, breastfeeding and flexible working arrangements. In addition, a comprehensive training curriculum focused on management accountability, "Managing People at UNICEF", was piloted.

50. Technical competencies in 28 generic job profiles and job descriptions were revised and new profiles developed to reflect the expected level of expertise to mainstream gender. This covered management positions at the country level as well as all technical programme areas. For external technical expertise, a global gender roster was established as a one-stop shop for the sourcing of gender experts. Links are also provided to other external resources such as the Global Web Roster and the Gender Capacity Stand-by Project roster. In addition, the UNDP-UNICEF Community of Practice on Gender now has close to 300 members, who access information and resources, discuss issues, and share experiences through this platform.

51. The organization carries out annual self-assessment surveys of staff to better gauge staff perceptions of their knowledge, competencies and skills in mainstreaming gender and promoting gender results in UNICEF-assisted programmes. The survey was first conducted in 2009.

52. UNICEF has been widely involved in inter-agency efforts to improve gender statistics and analysis. The organization is part of the Inter-agency and Expert Group

on Gender Statistics, working to develop a set of core indicators for global reporting. In addition, UNICEF is collaborating with UNFPA, the United Nations Statistics Division and UN-Women to produce a manual on gender analysis of census data. The aim is to provide national statistics offices, as well as civil society organizations and other partners, with a comprehensive orientation on how to effectively analyse census data through a gender lens.

53. UNICEF supports national capacities and efforts to collect and analyse sex-disaggregated data through the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS). The MICS framework also includes specific modules on key gender indicators, such as violence against women and girls and harmful practices. The improved data provide a strengthened basis on which to monitor progress towards achieving gender equality and the rights of women and girls. A major product of this work was the 2011 publication "Boys and Girls in the Life Cycle",[8] providing sex-disaggregated data and analysis on a wide range of indicators.

54. UNICEF continued its efforts to strengthen partnerships in gender equality, participating in key inter-agency forums on gender and humanitarian action. These included the Task Force on Women, Peace and Security; United Nations Action on Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict; and the IASC Sub-Working Group on Gender, co-chaired by UNICEF. UNICEF also took part in United Nations discussions on the establishment of UN-Women and seconded a senior staff member to the UN-Women transition team.

55. In an effort to harmonize the United Nations system support for the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and UN-Women facilitate the reporting of United Nations country teams (UNCTs) to the Committee during its pre-sessional working group meetings. Guidelines for UNCTs have been prepared to serve as a basis for joint reports. These efforts have improved the quality of information and analysis the Committee receives from the United Nations regarding the identification of issues and recommendations for Governments to address. In 2010, 13 UNCTs provided reports to the pre-sessional working group of the Committee.

56. Addressing gender-based violence, both in humanitarian and development contexts, was a particularly prominent area of work for UNICEF and in its partners through joint programmes. UNICEF worked to ensure that all country offices, based on the organization's mandate, take on a substantive role in this area as needed. Under the organization's leadership, the Handbook for Coordinating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings and the IASC-endorsed training package "Caring for Survivors of Sexual Violence in Emergencies" were produced. These tools aim to improve coordinated action to address gender-based violence in emergencies by enhancing the work of sub-clusters at the field level and the capacity of participating organizations to support programmes based on common standards.

57. Since 2009, UNICEF has been contributing to the Secretary-General's UNiTE campaign to end violence against women and girls through a unique partnership with private sector organizations, four United Nations agencies and the United States Government to support national Governments and civil society in tackling sexual violence against children, with a particular focus on girls. The "Together for

[8] UNICEF Division of Policy and Practice, 2011.

Girls" initiative is an innovative approach that uses global advocacy across networks to publicize the issue and to mobilize technical expertise, and ultimately resources, to support country-driven efforts for change.

58. UNICEF is participating in 8 of the 13 joint programmes being implemented under the Thematic Window for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment of the MDG Achievement Fund. These efforts contribute to achieving Millennium Development Goal 3 (promoting gender equality and women's empowerment) by adopting a comprehensive approach that addresses issues of access to opportunities and the guarantee of rights for women and girls.

59. UNICEF has also strengthened its partnership with a range of international NGOs, particularly regarding promoting the rights of girls. Among other initiatives, UNICEF has been a member of the advisory panel for the report series of Plan International, "Because I am a Girl". UNICEF has also worked closely with the Working Group on Girls of the NGO Committee on UNICEF to strengthen joint advocacy.

60. The intensive focus of UNICEF on pursuing equity in development results provides a major opportunity to advance organizational performance in gender mainstreaming and to make more effective and systematic contributions to gender-inclusive results and to the closing of gender gaps in development. The equity focus and, more specifically the SPAP, are key to ensuring that efforts build upon the progress achieved so far. UNICEF will also take advantage of the new opportunities for cooperation and national capacity development provided by the establishment of UN-Women, particularly in the context of the "Keeping the Promise" outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals[9] and the international human rights framework. UNICEF also recognizes the potential for applying knowledge and experience from a range of sectors and leading partners working on gender and development, including development banks and NGOs, and will expand its use of external knowledge as a primary means of further strengthening its performance.

V. Coherence, effectiveness and relevance of operational activities

Improving the functioning of the Resident Coordinator System and Management and Accountability System

61. UNICEF is committed at the highest levels to United Nations system-wide coherence as a means to increase results for children through the leveraging of partnerships and facilitation of collaborative work towards common goals. United Nations coherence is critically important for achieving sustained and equitable results in an efficient and effective manner. This commitment is encapsulated in the paper issued by UNICEF in 2011, "Making UN Coherence Work for Children". This articulates why United Nations coherence matters to UNICEF and how UNICEF is leading the shift from a process-driven to a results-driven approach. The paper notes that UNICEF collaborates with United Nations partners to support development and humanitarian programmes for the protection and promotion of children's rights, as

[9] General Assembly resolution 65/1.

mandated by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and that UNICEF strives to be a leader in United Nations coherence for reaching the Millennium Development Goals with equity through these partnerships.

62. UNICEF is committed to implementing the Management and Accountability System of the UN Development and Resident Coordinator (RC) System, including the "functional firewall", and has completed all required aspects of the Implementation Plan. UNICEF participated extensively in the review of the management and accountability system, with a view to improving the way members of the United Nations system work together. The recommendations of the review will feed into the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR), particularly in examining the normative, political, humanitarian and development roles of the United Nations system and improving the relevance of United Nations coherence in various country contexts.

63. To ensure that staff members are aware of their role in these commitments, UNICEF headquarters has been in regular communication with its regional directors, country representatives and offices. For the past three years, UNICEF has held annual meetings of staff drawn from all levels to address bottlenecks and make recommendations to strengthen coherence. In 2010, the focus was on middle-income countries and countries with a limited United Nations presence.

64. UNICEF continues its support of the RC system at all levels. At the country level, UNICEF increased its staff support to the RC system by an estimated 41 per cent between 2009 and 2010, while contributing a total of $11.1 million, which includes security costs, to the RC support unit and common systems. At global level, UNICEF leads or co-leads six inter-agency groups under the Chief Executives Board: the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) Programming Network (UNDG); the Human Rights Mechanism; Fiduciary Management and Oversight Group (UNDG); Procurement Network (High-level Committee on Management, HLCM); Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) Advisory Committee (UNDG); and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Reference Group (UNDG). More than 50 UNICEF staff members are involved in various inter-agency groups.

65. UNICEF regularly monitors the commitments in its TCPR Action Plan. Of the actions contained in the plan, 78 are completed and 12 are under way. A report with key indicators of progress on the plan is available at www.unicef.org/unreform.

66. UNICEF offers a range of resources to support the implementation of United Nations coherence, including "Delivering Better Results for Children — A Handy Guide to UN Coherence". ASK, the Internet-based help desk of UNICEF, provides rapid responses to queries on United Nations coherence based on inputs from a global network of experts. As of mid-October 2011, ASK had responded to 300 queries. The ASK database, country Wiki and the United Nations coherence intranet site of UNICEF are key resources and knowledge-sharing tools.

67. UNICEF regional directors, through regional UNDG Teams, continue to provide strategic leadership, technical advice, performance management (including RC/UNCT appraisal), and quality support/assurance to UNCTs. UNICEF regional offices also engage in regional and subregional theme groups and communities of practice, and participate in dialogues with political and economic organizations. In

2010-2011, all UNICEF Regional Management Teams held a dedicated session on United Nations coherence.

68. UNICEF continued to support the One UN pilot countries and countries adopting enhanced forms of coherence, with a view to increasing United Nations efficiency and effectiveness. UNICEF conducted several "virtual dialogues" with the pilot countries to share information on aspects of Delivering as One that are working and to address bottlenecks, and prepared an internal synthesis of the findings to identify ways in which UNICEF could further contribute to the initiative. The findings were also utilized as input to the 2011 High-level Intergovernmental Conference on Delivering as One, held in Montevideo. Regarding the independent evaluation of Delivering as One, UNICEF made financial and technical contributions through the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). The Chair of UNEG is represented in the Evaluation Advisory Committee and there is regular communication among the heads of UNEG agencies.

Simplification and harmonization of business practices

69. UNICEF is streamlining and harmonizing its business processes internally and in partnership with others, including by leading and co-leading a number of UNDG/HLCM working mechanisms, including the Fiduciary Management and Oversight Group (UNDG); Procurement Network (HLCM); HACT Advisory Committee (UNDG); ICT Reference Group (UNDG) and sub-groups on human resources. Though work is moving forward, there is a continued urgent need for actions that reduce transaction costs among agencies. In particular, more work is needed on streamlining reporting requirements, integrating programming and operations, and strengthening monitoring and evaluations mechanisms. Some areas where substantial gains could be achieved will require up-front investments, at a time when available resources are scarce.

70. In supply, UNICEF is supporting the use of national systems and capacity development in procurement. National procurement systems are used for procuring and distributing essential commodities for children in 42 countries, while cooperation is under way to strengthen national procurement, logistics and distribution systems in several others. UNICEF provided technical assistance to the Government of India to procure its own oral polio vaccine requirements and supported other countries in warehouse management and conducting reviews of the supply chain. Common challenges include capacity weaknesses in existing systems and inefficient transportation networks, particularly in humanitarian emergencies.

71. UNICEF chaired the HLCM Working Group on Harmonization of Procurement, which in 2011 completed a substantial analysis of, and made recommendations for, improving cooperation in the United Nations system, revising guidelines and establishing an interim Community of Practice.

72. UNICEF continued to promote the use of HACT as a way to reduce transaction costs and strengthen national capacities for financial management and improve accountability. UNICEF chaired the inter-agency HACT Advisory Group, which works towards resolving bottlenecks and developing policies to support UNCTs. By end-2010, 47 per cent of UNICEF country offices reported being HACT-compliant, while 97 country offices reported using the common form for funds transfer, a key element of HACT compliance. The Advisory Group is conducting a global

assessment on HACT implementation. HACT implementation is generally hampered by a lack of availability of resources to develop web-based data entry, reporting and monitoring systems. There is need for further capacity development of government counterparts and United Nations staff, and the approach would also benefit from wider participation of agencies in the UNCTs.

73. UNICEF has been a significant contributor to the work of the UNDG Working Group on RC System Issues (WG-RCSI) and its sub-group, the Talent Management Taskforce. A key objective of the task force was strengthening the capability of the United Nations system to attract, develop and retain suitable candidates for RC posts. A series of other initiatives was also implemented to address gaps in the system and strengthen leadership development.

74. The RC and UNCT competency development and learning strategy were launched. Work covered a competency mapping exercise, revision of the competency framework for the Resident Coordinator Assessment Centre to better reflect a balance between humanitarian and development work, and adjustments made to the Centre to better reflect all parts of the system. Focus intensified on strategic political and analytical thinking, as well as on advocacy. Key priorities for the WG-RCSI for 2011 included a focus on the RC induction programme, grooming of future RCs and performance management.

75. UNICEF has been working with the United Nations Secretariat, UNDP, UNFPA and the World Food Programme (WFP) on harmonization of financial regulations and rules (FRRs). Although significant progress had been made, the complexity of the issues involved made it impossible to complete this work in time for presentation to the Executive Board in 2011. It was agreed that agencies would continue to submit individual FRRs to their respective Boards. UNICEF submitted amended FRRs to its Executive Board at the second regular session of 2011. These amendments were discussed, and principles agreed, with the United Nations Secretariat, UNDP and UNFPA.

76. UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF established a joint road map towards developing an integrated budget. In line with this road map, the Executive Boards of the three agencies approved the new harmonized cost classification categories as well as improvements in presenting results-based budgets. The harmonized categories have been applied to the presentation of the 2012-2013 institutional budgets. Future collaboration with UNDP and UNFPA will focus on the review of cost recovery methodology and rates and on developing a proposal for presentation of an integrated budget.

77. UNICEF participates in the UNDG Task Team on Common Premises, which reviews and approves proposals and guides UNCTs on establishing common premises, addressing funding and legal challenges and ongoing projects. Work on common premises is constrained by lack of funding and, in some cases, by host Governments not providing suitable arrangements that comply with Minimum Operating Security Standards. The possibility of a public-private partnership modality to build, lease and own is being explored.

78. UNICEF participated in the newly established inter-agency Reference Group on Common Services, which is updating United Nations operations guidance and developing a framework for testing a set of pre-identified common services in several countries. UNICEF also participated in the Thematic Working Group on

Support, which developed a memorandum of understanding to provide access to services from missions supported by the Department for Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, and finalized a proposal that can greatly impact business practices and generate cost savings in the field.

79. The UNDG Task Team on ICT, chaired by UNICEF, is tasked with establishing country office ICT standards that can be adopted by member agencies and can provide improvements in ICT operations. The Task Team provides guidance on mechanisms to address country-level common ICT service needs, and identifies opportunities for synergies and consolidation in the areas of infrastructure, such as data centres and global communications, customer support, and ICT security. In support of Delivering as One, the Task Team provided continued support to pilot country implementation, including technical missions to Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe in 2011. The Task Team also continued to promote the use of common ICT standards. In 2010 an ICT "scale-up" survey was completed in order to determine the readiness of UNDAF countries to embark on common ICT projects. The Task Team is seeking much needed funding to implement the ICT scale-up proposal, which would provide support to common United Nations ICT initiatives, including for Delivering as One initiatives.

VI. Evaluation of operational activities

80. Evaluation remains vitally important for the work of UNICEF, both in terms of ensuring accountability for results and for generating evidence for continual learning and improvement as an organization. UNICEF maintains a robust corporate evaluation agenda having two parts: global evaluations managed within the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (IMEF) approved by the Executive Board; and inter-agency and joint evaluations, featuring both development and humanitarian themes. The majority of UNICEF evaluations (over 95 per cent), however, are conducted at the country level through a decentralized evaluation system. UNICEF offices are closely involved in supporting national evaluation capacity.

81. In addition, UNICEF engages significantly with UNEG in strengthening the accountability and coherence of the United Nations and international evaluation system and in supporting the development of national evaluation capacity in partnership with other United Nations agencies, national Governments and a variety of institutions. UNICEF has continued to play an instrumental role in UNEG both in terms of advocacy for a strong evaluation function across the United Nations system and of contributing to the substantive work of UNEG in key areas. These areas include integrating gender equality and human rights in evaluation; impact evaluation; guidance on the UNDAF evaluations; national capacity development in evaluation; and establishing norms and standards for the evaluation function in the United Nations system.

82. The IMEF contains commitments by UNICEF to conduct 15 corporate-level evaluations in 2010-2011, including inter-agency evaluations. By mid-2011, 8 evaluations had been completed and were under implementation. The completed evaluations cover the following topics: organizational performance in adolescent development and participation programming; the UNICEF-Government of Netherlands early childhood development programme; education in emergencies and

post-crisis transition programming; the Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS campaign; and the operational response of UNICEF to the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. The findings from the evaluations are reviewed with senior management and, through a formal management response mechanism, are utilized systematically to strengthen performance.

83. UNICEF played a major role in several inter-agency evaluations assessing the work of the United Nations system and its partners. The country-led evaluation of the Delivering as One pilot countries was completed in late 2010 and provided valuable information on progress, challenges and lessons learned. UNICEF co-chaired the UNEG task force offering quality assurance. UNICEF also contributed to the independent comprehensive evaluation of Delivering as One, managed by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

84. UNICEF and other agencies supported an Evaluation of the Common Humanitarian Funds, led by the Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). UNICEF, together with OCHA and the International Rescue Committee, co-managed an Inter-Agency Real-Time Evaluation of the response to the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti. A follow-up evaluation, focusing on issues of transition and national capacity development, is under way.

85. UNICEF intensified its support to national evaluation capacity development, co-leading the development of guidance adopted by UNEG on roles for UNEG members in this area. This focused on the following: acting as a knowledge broker facilitating a "South-South" generation and sharing of good practices; promoting country-led evaluations and national evaluation systems; and supporting the professionalization of evaluation and use of national capacity.

86. A UNICEF internal conceptual framework document, "Developing national capacities for country-led evaluation systems" (July 2010) provided further rationale for engaging in national evaluation capacity development. It outlined actions to strengthen the enabling environment, develop institutional and individual capacities, and foster cooperation among stakeholders.

87. To facilitate learning and knowledge-sharing on country-led monitoring and evaluation systems, UNICEF and partners launched an interactive Web 2.0 platform, My M&E, to share knowledge on country-led monitoring and evaluation. Key initiatives include a reference centre with items contributed by members and live web seminars on evaluation issues in development. A total of 2,100 participants attended 14 web seminars offered by the major participating agencies: the International Labour Organization, UNDP, UNICEF, UN-Women, WFP, the Rockefeller Foundation and several global evaluation associations.

VII. Follow-up to international conferences

88. In July 2010, the Government of Japan co-hosted a Millennium Development Goals follow-up meeting in Tokyo, together with UNDP, UNICEF and the World Bank. This brought together ministers and representatives of international organizations and civil society to take forward the outcomes of the 2010 High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals. The meeting hosted a ministerial discussion on "Human Security and Equity in the

Achievement of the MDGs", and discussed the way forward beyond 2015, using the lessons learned from the decade of the Millennium Declaration.

89. At the XVIII International AIDS Society Conference, held in Vienna in 2010, UNICEF, under the banner of "Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS", emphasized children's rights, most-at-risk adolescents and the effective elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV as core issues. More than 115 of the 248 conference sessions were dedicated to themes directly relevant to children. The report, "Blame and banishment: the underground HIV epidemic affecting children in Eastern Europe and Central Asia",[10] specially released on the occasion, is being used as a key advocacy document on HIV issues affecting children in the region.

90. UNICEF contributed to the preparations of and follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), held in Istanbul in May 2011. UNICEF provided data and inputs to the report of the Secretary-General,[11] especially on issues relating to the situation of children in LDCs; and participated in a series of pre-conference events to propose ways forward, including regarding access to essential services. At a special event organized with the Governments of Nepal and the United States and with WFP on "Equitable Human Development: Investing in Nutrition in LDCs", the UNICEF Executive Director spoke of the need to collectively address the silent emergency of child undernutrition. The Executive Director also stressed the need not only to mobilize more resources for development in LDCs, but also to direct investment towards areas of greatest return by focusing on the most disadvantaged. As part of the collective effort by the United Nations to support the implementation of the Programme of Action, UNICEF will continue to assist national implementation measures for equitable progress towards child-focused development goals in LDCs.

91. The Climate Ambassador Programme of UNICEF, developed following the United Nations Climate Change Conference, held in 2009 in Copenhagen, equips young people and adolescents with skills related to advocacy, communications (via social media and radio), climate adaptation and mitigation, and disaster risk reduction. It also seeks to empower young people to engage in climate change debates and local actions. The Climate Ambassadors operate in over 20 countries, including in Zambia, where UNICEF provides training to equip young people with skills to respond to flood and deforestation risks in their communities.

92. UNICEF has intensified its engagement with the various mechanisms responsible for the promotion of the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities. In 2010, UNICEF shared its experiences in social protection with the Forum on Minority Issues and has since engaged with the Independent Expert on Minorities on issues concerning children of minority background. The partnership with the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues has similarly been enhanced, culminating in a Comprehensive Dialogue with the Forum, in May 2011, for mutual sharing of experiences and strategies on promoting the rights of indigenous children. UNICEF will aim to increase its coherence in programme cooperation through a new strategic framework on indigenous and minority children.

[10] UNICEF (Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States), 2010.

[11] A/65/80-E/2010/77.

93. UNICEF was significantly engaged in the International Year of Youth, which ended in September 2011. Follow-up to this initiative will involve an intensified focus on adolescents by UNICEF. One critical area is to promote disaggregated-data collection on adolescents as a basis for improved programming. The approach of UNICEF to adolescent participation will focus on inclusive participation in the family and community, with adolescents, including the most marginalized, increasingly recognized as change agents within their communities.

94. A historic High-Level Meeting on Cooperation for Child Rights in the Asia-Pacific Region, held in Beijing in November 2010, brought together over 100 senior leaders from 28 countries to discuss opportunities for mutual cooperation in the promotion of child rights, within the framework of South-South cooperation. Inaugurated by the Vice-President of China, the meeting concluded with the adoption of the Beijing Declaration on South-South Cooperation for Child Rights. Data generated from studies and evaluations undertaken at the regional level were used strategically to advance the equity agenda and formed the basis for the Declaration.

95. The TCPR provides many useful directions for the operational activities of the United Nations system. UNICEF looks forward to contributing to the preparatory process for the QCPR, including the analysis of progress on the TCPR and the major thematic issues that will be addressed.

VIII. Draft decision

96. The Executive Board *decides* to transmit the present report (E/2012/6-E/ICEF/2012/3) to the Economic and Social Council, along with a summary of the comments and guidance provided by delegations at the present session.